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Statement by

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**at the UN Conference to Review Progress Made in the
Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat
and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light
Weapons in All Its Aspects**

(3 July 2006, New York)

Mr. President,

At the outset, my delegation would like to join others in extending hearty congratulations on your well-deserved election to the presidency of this important Conference. The other members of the bureau also deserve our congratulations on their unanimous elections.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is a huge global threat, and it has been a perennial problem for many countries. Uncontrolled spread of small arms has fueled up conflict and civil wars in many parts of the world. Besides, it has caused serious humanitarian, social, economic and developmental consequences. The Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit has also well recognized the negative effect of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on development, peace, security and human rights.

Nepal believes that sincere implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons could substantially reduce the illegal trade and proliferation of small arms. While my delegation takes note with satisfaction over progress that has been achieved in many areas of the Programme of Action, there is still urgent need for effective control over small arms and light weapons. The United Nations should extend its financial and technical cooperation to member States especially the Least Developed Countries to strengthen national capacity to undertake necessary measures for the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national level.

Nepal welcomes the initiatives taken at both the international and the regional levels to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The adoption of the International Instrument to enable states to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons by General Assembly last year was the most significant achievement made in this field. My delegation hopes that if this instrument is implemented sincerely, it would definitely help the member states control and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms. We also feel that more emphasis should be laid down on implementation as well as monitoring mechanism.

Mr. President,

The Government of Nepal attaches great importance to the issue of Small Arms and Light Weapons. Being a country affected by armed conflict for over a decade, the Government has taken various measures to implement the Programme of Action. The Government is setting up a National Authority on Disarmament Affairs soon. The Authority will be responsible for formulating policies and

reporting on all disarmament matters. The Authority will also serve as a national contact point concerning all disarmament related matters. Similarly, a working group consisting of the representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs has been set up to implement the Programme of Action. For the implementation of the Programme of Action, the Government of Nepal is committed to work in coordination with civil society organizations. With this spirit, my delegation also includes a civil society member.

Very stringent domestic laws and regulations are in place regarding the purchase and possession of firearms. The Explosives Substances Act, 1962, Explosive Substances Rules, 1964, Arms and Ammunitions Act, 1963 and Arms and Ammunition Regulations, 1971 have provisions to regulate the manufacturing, possession, supply and purchase as well as import and export of SALWs. We have also given more emphasis on the effective enforcement of our national laws and regulations to curb the illicit use of firearms.

It is encouraging that after a decade-long insurgency, Nepal is heading towards peace and stability. With the historic achievements made by the peaceful people's movement and the number of steps taken by the Government including the ceasefire and recent high level talks between the Government and the CPN (Maoists), prospects for a durable peace is on the horizon. We are hopeful that this will lead to a better regime for the control of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The Government of Nepal is fully committed to restoring peace and stability in the country.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, my delegation hopes that this conference to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects will be helpful in devising and effective future course of action. We strongly believe that collective efforts towards achieving this goal are vital to make the world better and safer for humanity.

Thank you Mr. President.